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wie er daraus zu parlamentarischer Selbstverwaltung fortschreitet — wer sich von ihm hat zeigen lassen, wie er einen kleinen Dichter im Kinde weckt, dessen Liebe zum Leben dieses im Aufsatz produktiv wiedergibt und beim Lesen genießt — und wer sich hat endlich in den Zauber mit einspinnen lassen, den er in traulichen, abendlichen Religionsstunden um die Herzen der Kinder webt, der wird glauben, dass wir auf rechter Fährte sind. Dem wird es klingen wie Glockenton am Ostermorgen, wie Lerschenschlag in Frühlingstagen.

Mit der Freude an allem Guten, Edlen und Wahren ist jenes tiefe Gefühl in die Kindesseele eingezogen, das die Menschen Liebe nennen, ist der alte Erlöser in ihr auferstanden, der Gott, der seinem grössten Verkündiger nach selbst die Liebe ist.

Mag dann die Welt den alten Gott vom Weltenthron stossen, unser Gott spottet solchem Tun, denn er beweist sein Dasein täglich und stündlich. Mag dann der Glaube an unsere Unvergänglichkeit dahinsinken, wir weinen ihm keine Träne nach, denn wir haben in unsrer Liebe, die das ganze unendliche All erfasst, den Hauch der Ewigkeit verspürt. Wir betrauern ihn nicht, denn uns lockt Unvergänglichkeit in unsern Kindern und Kindeskindern; in ihnen das Licht der Liebe göttlicher leuchten machen als in uns, ist eine Aufgabe, die Ewigkeitswerte birgt. Dann wird die Spur von unsern Erdentagen nie untergehen.

Euer Kinder Land sollt ihr lieben,

Die Liebe sei euer neuer Adel.

Also sprach Zarathustra.

Personality and Enthusiasm Versus Method.*

By **Professor Ernst Voss, Ph. D.**, University of Wisconsin.

The startling and sweeping statements made in recent years by some of our American professors of pedagogy about the value of the teaching of languages certainly must convey the impression that language teaching is doomed, and that we all will be allowed to retire from business as soon as the public at large is sufficiently enlightened to make this radical change.

Poor results in the teaching of ancient as well as modern languages are no doubt responsible for such radical statements, and in a great many instances it is indeed true that the results attained do not warrant the time spent in our schools on the study of these subjects. That, however,

* A paper read before the Teachers' Association of Illinois (Modern Language Section) on November 24, 1911.

might be said with equal justice of a great many other subjects just as inadequately taught in our public schools.

In any case, however, it is right for us to ask with William Allen White: "What is the matter with our language instruction?" Is the method to be blamed or are the teachers at fault?

I remember the time when a little pamphlet appeared in Germany under the title: "Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren" (Language teaching must be reformed) by Quo usque tandem, a pseudonym for Wilhelm Viëtor, now professor of English in the University of Marburg. At that time he was a teacher of modern languages in one of the Prussian gymnasia (high schools). This little book shocked all the old fogies amongst the modern language teachers in Germany, but from that time we have been talking about the reform method in modern language instruction, that he offered to supplant the old reading method as it had been used by the teachers of Latin and Greek for centuries.

No modern language teacher would now admit that he is not more or less an advocate of this reform. But has this all saving method brought about the change that we are looking for? Do our pupils know more French and German than those that received their instruction in these languages according to the old fashioned reading method? If we could have teachers like Max Walther, the director of the famous model school in Frankfurt on the Main, whom some of you may have seen at work during his last visit to the United States, then we would certainly be devout advocates of this method. But it is not so much the *method* of Director Walther; it is, as you will see at once, his *personality*, his *enthusiasm* for the subject, that he is teaching, or rather that he embodies while he is teaching, that guarantees his unusual success. For his *method* springs spontaneously out of the most thorough *knowledge* not only of the language and literature, but also of the manners and customs of the nation for whom he is the spokesman, the interpreter when he is at work. *Method is the dead form, it is personality that gives life and significance.*

Ask yourselves who were the teachers that had the greatest influence upon you in school or college. Were they not those who loved their subject because it had become part and parcel of themselves?

I cannot understand how anyone can call himself a teacher of French, a professor of French, and then dare to belittle a man like Victor Hugo in his lectures. If he can only see the small and petty things in the men whose works he is to interpret, he misunderstands his calling completely.

If a professor of German finds pleasure in running down the Nibelungenlied, the great epic dear to every German, if he gives lectures and writes essays on the absurdities, as he sees them, in this wonderful production, it is high time for him to change his profession. Why devote your life to something that you cannot love, that you cannot hold up to

the young as worthy of admiration? *A cynic is bad enough in every other walk of life, but he is certainly a curse in the teaching profession.* A man who has no faith in mankind, who is always ready to say, What is the use? should not dare to call himself an educator, a teacher.

Here, as we Germans say, "liegt der Has im Pfeffer," this is the kernel of the whole matter. Professor Walther was educated most thoroughly for his profession, first at the gymnasium, then at the universities, where he received a thorough training in the history of the languages that he was to teach. And, last of all, he studied in that country itself, whose treasures of life, literature, history and art he was to interpret, to unfold before the eyes of his attentive and eager pupils.

And here I make the sweeping statement that only in exceptional cases the teachers of French or German in our American high schools and colleges are ready and prepared in their subjects as they should be, if they wish to inspire, if they wish to make a lasting impression upon their pupils. Our teachers are badly prepared for their tasks and the demands upon our pupils are far too much in far too short a time. The worst of it is, we continually deceive ourselves about what we think we are accomplishing. We often cannot speak the language that we pretend to teach, we cannot read it intelligently in many cases, we know too little about the country, in which this language is spoken, neither about its history, its geography, nor about the customs and manners of its people. We are not in sympathy with the ideals of the people who live in that country. But we teach French or we teach German! and of course we cannot enjoy our subject, because we do not master it, because it *does not master us and inspire us.*

Let us at last be outspoken and honest on this matter. I have hoped for years that the remedy for all this sham, this slipshod preparation for the profession might be discovered and loudly demanded from the ranks of the teachers themselves. It is from within that we must hope to find our remedy. Outside obstructions will disappear of themselves.

Our teachers of German and French begin their preparation for their work in the High School, where they are supposed to lay the foundation for the modern languages in a *two years course*. What a farce! One year of Grammar and another year of reading, the amount of which is recommended and prescribed by the infallible committee of twelve!

I refer to the work of our secondary schools from experience, having begun my teaching in this country in one of our large High Schools. The next step found me an instructor at the University of Michigan, where I performed for the university, just as instructors must do in every such institution up to the present day, the duties duly belonging to a grade or to a high school teacher.

Every modern language teacher knows that the amount of reading demanded or suggested in the elementary courses in French or German is nonsensical, a lie in itself, just the thing needed to make slipshod work the rule. But in this well organized, subservient system of ours, nobody dares to speak, nobody dares to register his private convictions, dares to defy these unreasonable, unpedagogical demands.

Let me speak for you today in the interest of the modern languages that we methodically murder in our high schools and for which we methodically foster and cultivate in the hearts and minds of our youth a hatred that they are ready to transfer when they grow older to the people that use this language in daily intercourse.

I shall never forget how I felt when I was told while connected with the high school in Saginaw, Michigan, that German Grammar was to be administered daily in overdoses throughout the first year of the high school course. How the pupils *did it*, how they learned as much about it in that short time as they actually did, is still a conundrum to me, and there is no system of weights and measures to determine how much brain power, how much health was absolutely wasted in the process.

After these two years of cramming in German or French in the High School we add four more years in the university, probably only increasing the pace, and assigning outside reading in regard to which teacher and pupil alike deceive themselves.

Please examine the courses that our prospective teachers of German and French are obliged to take while in attendance at the university and sincerely consider whether they are prepared to teach modern languages.

I do not blame them, I blame our *system* and I suggest a remedy. We cannot throw our foreign modern languages overboard as some of my colleagues occupying chairs of pedagogy in our universities have boldly suggested. The remedy can only lie in finding a way to do well what has formerly been begun so late and continued so hastily and irrationally.

These languages must be taught for commercial as well as pedagogical and scientific reasons. The time has come when this country can no longer disregard the necessity of a thorough knowledge of Spanish, French and German for commercial reasons alone, if not in order to introduce the American boy and girl to the treasures of the literatures of these people. For that reason it is absolutely necessary not only to lengthen the course for modern language instruction in the high schools, but to begin the study of Spanish, French or German in the *grades, where they belong*, since those are the years of the child's life when *language* is the thing he can most easily learn. To prove that this is democratic as well as patriotic, I call your attention for a moment, not to the schools of monarchical Germany or England, but to those of democratic Switzerland, where you will

find all these problems solved that confront us. The same thing or something similar to it is in vogue in America now.

This is not a dream, born in the mind of an impractical university professor. I call your attention to the schools of Saginaw, Mich., where German is taught for those that want it from the kindergarten to the end of the high school course. There my little American niece, 9 years of age, has had such instruction in the schools, that she writes me an admirable German letter and follows it with another in English, expressing herself equally well in both languages.

Let us examine the outlines of the courses of study in the schools of the Canton Geneva in Switzerland.

Ecole primaire.

	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
French	9	9	9	8	8	8
Arithmetic	2½	3	3	3	3	3
Geometry	—	—	2	2	2	2
German	—	—	—	1½	3	3
Geography	—	1½	2	2	2	2
History	—	—	—	1½	1½	1½
Drawing	3	3	4	3	3	3
Writing	1½	1½	1½	1	1	1
Gymnastics	6	4	3	3	1½	1½
Singing	2	2	1½	1	1	1
Man. Training	6	6	4	4	4	4
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hours per week	30	30	30	30	30	30

Vocation or Professional School.

	I.	II.
French	3	3
German	4	4
Commercial Geography	2	2
History and Civil Govern.	2	2
Arithmetic and Algebra	2	2*
Geometry	2	3*
Mechanics	—	5*
Natur. Science	2	—
Physics	2	2
Chemistry	—	2
Bookkeeping	2	2
Freehand Drawing	6	6
Technical Drawing	2	2

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Man: Training and Modelling	4	4
Gymnastics	1	1
	—	—
Hours per week	34	35

* Half a year.

Collège. Lower Classes.

	VII.	VI.	V.
French	5	5	5
Latin	5	5	6
German	4	4	4
History	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Arithmetic	3	3	3
Natur. Science	2	2	2
Drawing	3	3	3
Writing	1	1	—
Singing	1	1	1
Gymnastics	2	2	2
	—	—	—
Hours per week	30	30	30

A. Gymnase (High School).

	IV.	III.	II.	I.
French	4	4	4	4
German	5	5	5	5
History	2	2	2	2
Geography	3	3	2	—
Mathematics	4	4	4	1
Nat. Science	3	3	3	—
Phys. Chem.	—	—	2	6
Political Economy and Law	—	—	—	2
Bookkeeping	1	1	—	—
Drawing	2	2	2	2
Pedagogical Subjects	7	9	9	12
	—	—	—	—
Hours per week	31	33	33	34

Gymnase (High School).

A. Pedagogical Course.

	IV.	III.	II.	I.
French	3	3	3	3
German	5	5	5	5
English	3	3	2	2
History	2	2	2	2
Geography	3	3	—	—

Mathem.	4	4	4	3
Adv. Mathem.	2	2	3	4
Mathem. Geography	—	—	1	—
Natur. Science	3	3	3	—
Physics and Chemistry	—	—	2	6
Drawing	3	3	2	2
Technical Drawing, Descriptive Geometry	3	3	4	4
	—	—	—	—
Hours per week	31	31	31	31

C. Modern Classical Course.

	IV.	III.	II.	I.
French	4	4	4	4
Latin	4	4	4	4
German	5	5	5	5
English	3	3	3	3
History	2	2	2	2
Geography	3	3	2	—
Mathematics	4	4	4	3
Natur. Science	3	3	3	—
Physics and Chemistry	—	—	2	6
Political Economy	—	—	—	2
Bookkeeping	1	1	—	—
Drawing	2	2	2	2
	—	—	—	—
Hours per week	31	31	31	31

D. Ancient Classical Course.

	IV.	III.	II.	I.
French	3	3	3	4
Latin	8	7	6	6
Greek	7	7	6	5
German	3	3	3	3
History	3	3	3	3
Geography	2	2	2	—
Mathematics	3	4	4	3
Natur. Science	2	2	1	—
Physics and Chemistry	—	—	2	5
Philosophy	—	—	1	2
	—	—	—	—
Hours per week	31	31	31	31

The first table gives the course of study for the first six years. You will notice that the study of the first foreign language begins in the fourth

year where one hour and a half a week is devoted to this subject; not enough, I am sure, to make anybody feel uneasy.

During the next two years three hours a week are devoted to this subject. Pupils who cannot continue their schooling any longer than two years after having completed the grades, enter the *vocation school*. Of the work done here the next table gives you an illustration. It is practical enough to satisfy even the most radical reformer. You find manual training, bookkeeping, modelling, commercial geography, mechanics, drawing, gymnastics, but you also notice that the study of a foreign language gets four hours a week during these last two years that the young Swiss who is eager to earn a living spends in school.

Pupils, however, may enter the lower gymnasium or intermediate grades after the end of the fifth year in the lower grades, and stay there for three years, devoting altogether not more than eight years to their preparation for life. In the lower gymnasium an ancient language, Latin, is added to the curriculum, so that the pupil graduating at the end of his course has had 5 years of work in a *modern* and 3 years of work in an *ancient language*.—Imagine what a difference it would make to you, if you could receive in the American high-school boys and girls so trained in the grades for linguistic work.

In the upper gymnasium (the high school proper) the work of the lower gymnasium is continued for four more years and the pupil may enter either the *pedagogical* course which prepares him for the Normal School, the *technical* course which fits him best for the engineering courses in the polytechnical schools, or he elects the *ancient* or the *modern classical* course.

As a preparation for the study of the modern classics he begins here the study of *English* as a *third* foreign language, continuing the study of Latin and German for four more years.

At the end of his studies in the gymnasium he has had 9 years of German, 7 years of Latin, 4 years of English.

With such preparation he enters the *university*, devoting all his time while there to those subjects in which he is especially interested.

Do you wonder that he knows something about these languages that he wishes to teach? Do you wonder that he may have succeeded in feeling perfectly at home in these tongues and in the countries in which they are spoken? Do you not think that he might enjoy, thoroughly enjoy, introducing the young minds entrusted to his care to the treasures stored away in the literature of these languages?

Can you imagine that he would look upon this work as a stepping stone to something else more to his taste, more honorable, more lucrative? Of course not! for the simple reason that he would find it hard to dis-

cover anything better, anything in which he is more interested.—And here is again, “*der Haas im Pfeffer*”. Here is remedy number two. *First, better prepared teachers; second, real professionals, not amateurs, not time servers, not transients, but men with a life mission, men with backbone, men of character, who know not fear.* Men who are not only experts with regard to linguistic questions and language teaching, but who are an inspiration to their students in the greatest of all arts, the art of plain living and high thinking.

And just here I call to mind a man who was President of Wisconsin University at a time when that institution was struggling to find itself and its mission. I refer to President Bascom, one of God’s Appointed. What an impression this man has made upon all his pupils, whether they became in later life, professors like himself, or physicians, or lawyers, or engineers, or politicians. His specialty was moral philosophy, but his great mission was to teach and to live integrity and idealism, to inspire love of truth, love of straightforwardness.

He died a few weeks ago, and upon his death testimony of praise and gratitude poured out in his memory from prominent men in all walks of life. And the one thought of each tender tribute was the debt owed to him, in that he through *his personality*, had taught them all the meanness and worthlessness of sham and deceit, the eternal beauty of truth, and single hearted devotion to the verities of life.—What a lesson his life is to every teacher as he stands in his place!—

In the classroom, be that the kindergarten, the grade, the high school or the college, the pupil should continually catch glimpses of Truth, and learning to delight in her purity, become ready at last to sacrifice life itself in her service. In this way only will our schools become the mothers of men, in this way only can our schools become vital agencies for the training of men in the great business of living. All along the line from the kindergarten teachers to the university presidents we must learn to make the greater demand for men of strong *personality* as against the man whose devotion to *method* blinds him to the business of *educating*.

And this choice of the born teacher, the gottbegnadeten Schulmeister like President Bascom and Rudolph Hildebrand, is the rock upon which we build or the one upon which we wreck our school system.

No other responsibility is second to it. One may say without exaggeration that no other responsibility is equal to it.

But how gayly do the political influences in our school boards set about this important, this momentous business and determine their appointments by favoritism and nepotism. The questions asked by our teachers’ agencies, an institution that in itself is a degradation to the teaching profession, do lately include some reference to personality, enthusiasm, general qualities, but they still weigh far too little. We must

educate the public at large in these things. We must labor as a body and as individuals to divorce our schools from all political connection. We must arouse a sentiment in the smaller towns and villages as well as in the cities that will demand *expert service* from a highly paid and still more highly trained superintendent; or better still from a *commission* solely responsible for the selection of teachers on these fundamental questions of *personality* and *scholarship*. Let those entrusted with such far reaching vital decisions as these come to their task with full sense of their responsibility to the community, for in no other place can the false servant do us such irreparable harm.

The fate of educational reform, language teaching included, rests entirely in your hands and will be decided by what is done through your efforts.

No one else can do it for you.

So long as you are satisfied with the unworthy conditions existing in this country, so long as you allow yourselves to be hired by the year by unscrupulous political schoolboards, so long as you allow a politician to shape for you the educational system of the whole state, we cannot initiate better things.

The feeling of solidarity must be created amongst you. Pride of the profession must spring up in your hearts, so that no one may look upon your business as a cheap affair. *Come into the ranks of educators for your life work, filled with enthusiasm over its opportunities and with a holy fire burning within your breasts.* Prove to the community in which you find a place, that your profession is one of the noblest in which man can possibly engage. Raise the standard of the work in the grades, change the courses of study and give us *better prepared teachers* for this work. Let it be your pride and your ambition to make the American schools model schools for all democracies; not by saying that they are, but by investigation, comparison, intelligent understanding of the schools of other lands, and an adaption of those things in which they excel us.

In this scientific manner of procedure the day will surely come when the American teacher will be first of all well prepared, and secondly well paid; when he will be highly honored and respected; when the whole nation will listen to him as the natural leader, in whom it has learned to trust.

In that day we will see the downfall of the politician who now too often rules over your profession in the School Board or in the person of some city, county or State Superintendent.